WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A conductive electroless plated powder comprising:

core particles; and

a nickel film formed by an electroless plating process on the surface of each core particle,

wherein crystal grain boundaries in the nickel film are primarily oriented in a direction of the thickness of the nickel film.

2. A conductive electroless plated powder according to claim 1, further comprising an electroless plated gold film deposited on the nickel film.

3. A method for making a conductive electroless plating powder comprising the steps of:

(I) allowing the core particles which have a noble metal ion-capturing ability to capture noble metal ions, and reducing the noble metal ions so that the surfaces of the core particles support the noble metal;

(II) dispersing the core particles in an initial thin film-forming solution containing nickel ions, a reducing agent, and a complexing agent comprising an amine to prepare an aqueous suspension, and reducing the nickel ions to form initial thin nickel films on a surface of each of the core particles; and

(III) adding a nickel ion-containing solution containing the same complexing agent and a reducing agent-containing

solution individually and simultaneously to the aqueous suspension containing the core particles provided with the initial thin nickel films and the complexing agent to perform electroless plating.

4. A method according to claim 3, further comprising at least one of the steps of:

adjusting the amounts of the nickel ion-containing solution added and the reducing agent-containing solution added;

adjusting the initial concentration of the complexing agent in the aqueous suspension; and

adjusting the concentration of the complexing agent in the nickel ion-containing solution, so as to maintain the concentration of the complexing agent in the aqueous suspension in the range of 0.003 to 10 moles/l in said step (III).

5. A method according to claim 3, further comprising the step of using glycine or ethylenediamine as the complexing agent.

6. A method according to claim 4, further comprising the step of using glycine or ethylenediamine as the complexing agent.

7. A method according to claim 3, further comprising the step of providing, before said step (III), a ratio of the sum

of the surface areas of the core particles contained in the aqueous suspension to the volume of the aqueous suspension between 0.1 to 15 m^2/l.

8. A method according to claim 4, further comprising the step of providing, before said step (III), a ratio of the sum of the surface areas of the core particles contained in the aqueous suspension to the volume of the aqueous suspension between 0.1 to 15 m^2/l.

9. A method according to claim 5, further comprising the step of providing, before said step (III), a ratio of the sum of the surface areas of the core particles contained in the aqueous suspension to the volume of the aqueous suspension between 0.1 to 15 m^2/l.

10. A method according to claim 3, further comprising the step of imparting the noble metal ion-capturing ability to the core particles by a surface treatment.